



Second Exploratory Meeting

Between the Vice President of the European Commission for Democracy & Demography Dubravka Šuica & Leading Demographers at the EU

Wednesday, 28 April 2021, 2-4 pm CET

Co-organised by:



Orientation Note

For the meeting of the Vice-President for Democracy and Demography with demography experts

The purpose of this second meeting in the series of meetings bringing together the European Commission's Vice-President for Democracy and Demography and European demography experts is to discuss: a) the role of demography in the recovery plans for Europe and b) population decline and brain drain.

Role of Demography in Recovery

As part of the response to the current crisis, the EU put a European recovery plan in place. Its centrepiece, the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), requires Member States to submit national recovery and resilience plans to access the funding. In order to best support the recovery and resilience of Member States, the role of demography in the entire process is crucial.

The financial effort that the EU is doing with its Member States by putting in place the RRF — including loans that extend far beyond the next financial period — is major and has consequences for future generations. This is why we need to make sure that the recovery plans are sustainable and resilient, and that investments are aligned with the medium and longer-term EU demographic needs. Given the importance of demography in underpinning a sustainable recovery and improving the resilience of societies and economies, we would like to discuss the following questions:

1. Which demographic trends in Europe do you consider to have the greatest impact on the recovery of Europe — both positive and negative?
2. Which specific policies could support the economic and social recovery by harnessing or taking into account specific demographic developments?

Population Decline and Brain Drain

The Vice-President's mission letter tasks Vice-President Šuica to look at ways to facilitate the exchange of best practices between different parts of Europe that are facing the same challenges and, as part of this, to look into ways of supporting areas most impacted by „brain drain“.

Against this background — and with the help of the soon-to-be-published Atlas of Demography — the Vice-President's ambition is to identify the EU regions most affected by the phenomenon of population decline over the last decade and map the drivers of this phenomenon. The objective is to better address the consequences of population decline on the economic growth of these regions, attractiveness for investments, maintaining public infrastructure or services and sustainability of social security systems and public budgets.

We intend to present an initiative as soon as possible with the aim of not only identifying the issues and constructing a narrative but also to offer solutions. We would like to address the following questions to frame the reflection:

1. What are the drivers of population decline and what are the differences between decline generated by low fertility and decline generated by outward migration?
2. What mitigation and/or adaptation measures/solutions could be put in place to address the challenges associated with population decline?
3. How can the phenomenon of brain drain be converted into brain gain or more permanent brain circulation that is beneficial to all regions?

Participants



Gunnar Andersson

Professor in Demography, and head of the Stockholm University Demography Unit (SUDA). Among others, he has served as coordinator of the Stockholm University SIMSAM Node for Demographic Research, as part of the Swedish Initiative for research on Microdata in the Social and Medical Sciences, and as Associate Director of Stockholm University Linnaeus Center on Social Policy and Family Dynamics in Europe.

His main interests are fertility, family trends and dynamics, social policy, welfare states and fertility, migrant trajectories, generations and gender, ageing and mortality.



Francesco Billari

Professor in Demography and Dean of the Faculty at Bocconi University, Milan. Previously, he worked at the University of Oxford (Department of Sociology, where he also served as Head of Department) and Nuffield College (where he was a Professorial Fellow), and at the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research (Head of the Independent Research Group on the Demography of Early Adulthood).

His main interests are fertility and family change, the transition to adulthood, life course analysis, population forecasting, digitalization and demography, and comparative surveys.



Agnieszka Chłoń-Domińczak

Professor at the Institute of Statistics and Demography at Warsaw School of Economics. Previously, she served as Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy of Poland (2008-2009), where she also headed the Department of Economic Analyses and Forecasting. As a consultant, she participated in numerous activities related to pension reforms in the region of Central and Eastern Europe, cooperating with the World Bank, ILO and the OECD.

Her research interest include: demographic behaviour, pension systems, labour markets, social policy, health and education.



Ivan Čipin

Professor of Demography at the Faculty of Economics & Business, University of Zagreb. He is the head of the Centre for Longitudinal Population Studies (CLPS) at the Department of Demography, coordinating Croatian participation in international multidisciplinary population surveys. From working with various Croatian governmental institutions and his current consulting work with the World Bank, he has experience as an expert demographer.

His research interests include low fertility – especially in Southeastern European countries – population ageing and longevity and family and household demography.



Helga de Valk

Professor of Migration and the Life Course at the University of Groningen and Director of the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI), where she is also theme leader 'Migration and Migrants'. She is currently President of the European Association for Population Studies (EAPS) and member of the Dutch Advisory Committee for Migration Affairs (ACVZ).

Her research focuses on migration and integration issues, the transition to adulthood of immigrant youth, union and family formation, the second generation, segregation, and European mobility.



Juho Härkönen

Professor of Sociology and Director of Graduate Studies at the Department of Political and Social Sciences of the European University Institute, where he also serves as Co-Director the Comparative Life Course and Inequality Research Centre (CLIC). Previously, he worked as Professor of Sociology at Stockholm University (currently on leave) and was visiting professor at the University of Turku (2010-18).

His research interests cover life course research, the causes and consequences of family dynamics and structure, social stratification, and comparative research.



Wolfgang Lutz

Professor of Demography at the University of Vienna and Founding Director of the Wittgenstein Centre for Demography and Global Human Capital, a collaboration between the Department of Demography of the University of Vienna, the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) and the Vienna Institute of Demography of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (VID/ÖAW). He initiated and lead CEPAM (Centre for Population and Migration) a collaboration between the JRC of the European Commission and IIASA.

His main interest is in population forecasting and sustainable development.



Melinda Mills

Nuffield Professor of Sociology and Director of the Leverhulme Centre for Demographic Science at Oxford University. Among others, she is an Awarded Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE), Elected Fellow of the British Academy and member of the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies, UK Government Office of Science. Her research spans a range of interdisciplinary topics at the intersection of demography, sociology, molecular genetics and statistics.

Her substantive research specialises in fertility and human reproductive behaviour, assortative mating, chronotypes, labour market, life course and inequality.



Iñaki Permanyer

ICREA Research Professor and Head of the "Health and Demography" Unit the Centre for Demographic Studies in Barcelona. He is also the Principal Investigator of the ERC Consolidator Grant Healthy lifespan inequality: Measurement, trends and determinants (2020-2025). Previously, he has been a Ramón y Cajal Research fellow at the same research center and a Fulbright visiting scholar at Cornell University. He has collaborated extensively with international institutions, like the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and UN Women. In 2020, Iñaki received the prestigious European Demography Award.

His main research interest is the relationship between population dynamics and individuals' well-being.



Zsolt Spéder

Professor of Sociology at the University of Pécs, where he leads the Demographic Program at the Doctoral School of Demography and Sociology, and Director of the Hungarian Demographic Research Institute. He holds the prestigious title “Doctor of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences”. Previously, he served as President of the European Association for Population Studies (2016-2018) and President of the Demographic Committee, Division Economic and Legal Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

His areas of interest are family formation and fertility, attitudes and values towards the family, social inequalities and poverty, international comparisons and longitudinal studies.



Dubravka Šuica

Vice-President of the European Commission in charge of Democracy and Demography since December 2019. Šuica is a Croatian politician from the city of Dubrovnik, where she served as its first female mayor and was awarded the 2006 World Mayor Award. Šuica entered politics in the 1990s as a Member of the Croatian Democratic Union and served as a Member of the Croatian Parliament and Vice-Chair of the EU Integration Committee. For ten years, she was President of the Croatian Delegation to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. From 2013 to 2019, Šuica served as a Member of the European Parliament. In June 2019, she was elected as first Vice-Chair of EPP Group in the European Parliament.



Magda Tomasini

She was appointed director of the French Institute for Demographic Studies (Institut national d'études démographiques, INED) in January 2016. From 2011 to 2015, she was deputy director of Observation de la solidarité (Solidarity observatory) at the Direction de la recherche, des études, de l'évaluation et des statistiques (Research, evaluation and statistics division, DREES) after serving as head of the household income and assets division of INSEE (Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques) from 2008.



Emilio Zagheni

Director of the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research and Affiliate Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Washington, where he served as Training Director of the Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology. In 2016 he received the Trailblazer Award for Demographic Analysis from the European Association for Population Studies for his role in developing the field of Digital and Computational Demography.

He is best known for his work on combining digital trace data and traditional sources to track and understand migrations and to advance population science.